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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/806,641	03/23/2004	William D. Suval	27989/40011	2593
4743 7590 12/10/2007 MARSHALL, GERSTEIN & BORUN LLP 233 S. WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 6300 SEARS TOWER CHICAGO, IL 60606			EXAMINER THALER, MICHAEL H	
			ART UNIT 3731	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 12/10/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/806,641

Applicant(s)

SUVAL ET AL.

Examiner

Michael Thaler

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 October 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/9/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Claims 9-11 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on Oct. 30, 2007.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. It is unclear what the shape of the piercing/dilating head 2 is. Figure 5 shows the flattened sections 11 as being located only at discrete locations near the widest part of head 2, implying that the cross-section of the head 2 at line 7-7 is circular. However, figure 7 (which depicts the cross section at line 7-7) shows the flattened sections 11 at this location as well, making it unclear why they are not seen in figure 5 in the area near line

7-7. Figure 7 suggests that the cross-section of the head along its entire length may have flattened sections 11 since the flattened sections appear to be at both line 7-7 and at the widest part of head 2. Thus, it is unclear if the cross-section of the head 2 along most of its length and particularly near tip 23 is circular or non-circular with flattened sections 11.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's disclosure in view of Mueller ("The Surgical Armamentarium") and Young et al. (5,554,137). Applicant, from page 3, line 21 to page 4, line 15 of the specification, admits that it is old and well known to first use a surgical scalpel (which inherently includes a handle and a blade at one end of the handle) to make an incision and then a phlebectomy hook (which inherently includes a handle and a hook at one end of the handle) during a procedure known as ambulatory phlebectomy. In this admitted prior art, the blade and hook are

on separate instruments rather than being on opposite ends of a single handle. However, Mueller teaches that different tool heads may be located on opposite ends of a single handle (noting instrument A on page 369, for example). This arrangement has the self-evident advantages of reducing the total number of instruments as well as quickening the sequential use of the tool heads (since they are on the same instrument). It would have been obvious to locate the admitted prior art blade and hook on opposite ends of a single handle in order to obtain these advantages as well. The admitted prior art fails to include a bulbous dilating head on the blade. However, Young et al. teach that a bulbous dilating head 12 should be located on a blade 24 used to pierce skin in order to obtain the advantage of dilating the tissue as the blade cuts it to provide access to tissue under the skin (col. 3, lines 24-30). It would have been obvious to include a dilating head on the admitted prior art blade so that it too would have this advantage. As to claim 3, the admitted prior art fails to include a polygonal cross-section on the handle. However, it is old and well known in this art to so shape handles of surgical instruments in order to obtain the advantage of improving their grip. It would have

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been obvious to so shape the admitted prior art handle so that it too would have this advantage.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Thaler whose telephone number is (571) 272-4704. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhtuan T. Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

mht



MICHAEL THALER  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
ART UNIT 3731